

BARNES BUILDING
477 Cotton Avenue
Macon
Bibb County
Georgia

HABS NO. GA-2244

HABS
GA,
11-MACC
18-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Southeast Region
Atlanta, GA 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS
GA
11-MACQ,
18-

BARNES BUILDING

HABS No. GA-2244

LOCATION:

477 Cotton Avenue
Macon, Bibb County
Georgia

PRESENT OWNER:

City of Macon,
713 Southern Trust Building
Macon, Georgia 31201

PRESENT OCCUPANT:

Vacant - Structure demolished April 28, 1992

STATEMENT OF
SIGNIFICANCE:

The Barnes and Barnes Building was constructed in 1884 and was part of a commercial manufacturing strip along First Street. By 1908, Cotton Avenue was cut across the corner of First Street. An addition was added to the facade of the building to accommodate the new angle of the street. By 1924, a structure was built on to the north side of the building and at this time the adjacent building on the south was demolished and a gas station was built on the site. By 1939, the use of the Barnes Building was changed. Barnes and Barnes Insurance Agency occupied the building for offices and continued operation there until 1980. In 1961, one story was added to the back of the structure and between 1971 and 1974, the attached structure on the north side was demolished as was the gas station to the south. The building's historical and architectural integrities have been compromised by the changes that have occurred both to and around the building. No longer is there a commercial/manufacturing strip to anchor the building to the streetscape. The addition and removal of many historic characteristics have changed the architectural style and the historical integrity of the building has been compromised.

PART I. PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE BARNES BUILDING

The Barnes Building is located in the City of Macon's Historic Central Business District. This area was once part of a major commercial manufacturing strip and the area is still primarily commercial in context. There are few historic residential dwellings which make up this district.

Brick is the primary construction material, and many of the surrounding structures are made of brick. The building has a frontage of 42.5 feet on Cotton Avenue extending 35 feet on the back of the property, adjacent to a private alley.

It has been noted by Dr. Elizabeth A. Lyon, Chief of the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, that the Barnes Building should be considered as contributing to the Macon Historic District and that historically it has stood out as a landmark at this major intersection in the district. At this point, the Barnes Building is the last standing structure of the commercial manufacturing strip. The building is totally out of context with its environment as it exists today.

Physical Description of the Site

The building has been vacant since 1980 as the City has not been able to locate an interested developer. The water main in the building froze and activated the alarm which in turn caused the sprinkler system to go off causing severe water damage to the interior. All of the tiles from the ceiling on the first floor have fallen and are not salvageable. A second story window has been broken, drapes have rotted, the carpet has been soaked and mildew has set in (See Pictures, Attachment I).

PART II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The historical integrity of the Barnes Building has been compromised by the changes that have occurred both to and around the building. No longer is there a commercial manufacturing strip to anchor the building to the streetscape and there are privately owned and operated parking lots on either side of the building. While the facade is fifty (50) years old, the rear addition is not. The brick chimney pots have been removed and two modern windows have been added to the north wall. The facade is the only area of historical significance and the City plans to outline the footprint of the building including the facade in the design of the park which is scheduled to replace the building. Holes have been drilled into the exterior walls to relieve some of the pressure on the walls which are threatening to collapse (See Attachment II).

Specific History of the Site

The Barnes Building was constructed in 1884 and was part of a commercial manufacturing strip along First Street (See Attachment III). By 1908, Cotton Avenue had been cut across the corner of First Street (See Attachment IV). An addition was added to the facade of the building to accommodate the new angle of the street. By 1924, a structure was built on the north side of the building and at

that time the adjacent building on the south was demolished and a gas station was built on the site. By 1939, the use of the Barnes Building was changed. Barnes and Barnes Insurance Agency occupied the building for offices and continued operation there until 1980. In 1961, a one-story addition was added to the back of the structure and between 1971 and 1974, the attached structure on the north side was demolished as was the gas station to the south.

The name of the building's architect is unavailable. At this time, there seems to be no historical events or developments associated with this site.

Prepared by: Roxanne A. Burnham
Title: Grants Manager
Affiliation: City of Macon, Economic
and Community Development Department
Date: May 26, 1993